

NEVADA Connections

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Behind Bars: A Prison-based Family Literacy Project

—Submitted by Susan Graf, Nevada Literacy Coalition, 800/445-9673, sfgraf@clan.lib.nv.us

June 28, 2003 marked the final PACT (Parent and Child Together) activity for Nevada's first family literacy project based in a prison facility.

This pilot (demonstration) project was funded in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the federal Library Services and Technology Act. The grant was written by Marta Hall, Nevada Dept of Corrections, and Susan Graf, Nevada Literacy Coalition.

"Our plan is to utilize the data from this pilot project to find additional funding to implement this type of family literacy project in prisons throughout Nevada," commented Marta. "Children of incarcerated parents are five times as likely to become incarcerated. We need to break this pattern with strong learning and literacy skills and values."

Using the successful Family Storyteller project as a model, incarcerated mothers at the Jean Conservation Camp met with an instructor each week this past January through June. Dr. Joanne Kock used six children's books to teach basic literacy skills to 26 participating mothers. The mothers learned various literacy activities based on each book. On the final Saturday of each month, their children visited for PACT time. During PACT, the mothers and children used crayons, markers, crafts, and books in various activities designed to build literacy skills and provide positive interaction and bonding within the families.

"This was the best!" stated Joanne. "As the mothers attended class and were convinced of the value of our program, they encouraged their families to participate with home visits and PACT time. We saw increasing positive interaction within the families as the weeks passed. I only wish we had the funding to do it all over again!"

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension provided staffing for both the home visits to each participant's family and the classes provided to the mothers. Unlike similar programs in larger states, all of the children were in the care of extended family (versus foster care) homes. Some of the caregivers attended the PACT sessions, but that was not a requirement.

"This project offered training and education to the incarcerated mothers in specific, positive ways so that they could support their children's academic and literacy development. Participants concurrently learned how to achieve their own education goals, such as passing the GED," said Susan. "That was the purpose of this project — to help parents help themselves and their children."

A complete report should be available in late August; contact Susan Graf.



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Building Bridges for LD students

Nevada's ABE Professional Development Project is offering intensive "Bridges to Practice" training beginning in September. The training consists of four one-day workshops. The complete series of four workshops will be offered three times — in the northwest, the northeast, and the south.

Bridges to Practice Training Team

- ★ Claudia Bianca -Debay, Truckee Meadows Community College
- ★ Diana Bossart, Northern Nevada Literacy Council
- ★ JoAnne Goena, Nevada Literacy Coalition
- ★ Marta Hall, Nevada Department Of Corrections
- ★ Jennifer Miller, Great Basin College
- ★ Lyn Pizor, UNLV's Learning Enhancement Center

The goal of Bridges to Practice is to increase awareness among practitioners about learning disabilities and to help program leaders address the changes they might initiate to make their programs more responsive to the needs of adults with learning disabilities. The Bridges to Practice Training Team strongly recommends that all training participants attend all four sessions.

The workshops are free and are open to all adult educators in Nevada on a first-come/first-served basis. CEUs (.5 for each workshop) will be available.

PLACE AND CONTACT:

NORTHWEST

Reno: Claudia Bianca-DeBay
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800/445-9673 or 775/684-3340
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NORTH-EAST

Jennifer Miller
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Workshop #1: Preparing to Serve Adults with Learning Disabilities. Objectives:

- 1) Understand the definition of learning disabilities
- 2) Review the legal implications related to adults with learning disabilities
- 3) Develop a plan of action

9/12/03 Reno

9/13/03
Las Vegas

1/9/04
TBA

Workshop #2: The Assessment Process. Objectives:

- 1) Understand assessment for adults with learning disabilities
- 2) Learn about different screening instruments for adults with learning disabilities
- 3) Develop a plan of action

10/10/03 Reno

10/11/03
Las Vegas

1/23/04
TBA

Workshop # 3: The Planning Process. Objectives:

- 1) Prepare to develop the instructional plan
- 2) Develop the instructional plan
- 3) Select materials to implement the instructional plan

11/14/03 Carson City

11/15/03
Las Vegas

2/13/04
TBA

Workshop #4: The Teaching/Learning Process. Objectives:

- 1) Meet the challenge of teaching adults with learning disabilities
- 2) Create an appropriate learning environment with instructional adaptations and accommodations
- 3) Learn LD-appropriate instruction techniques and methods

12/5/03 Carson City

12/6/03
Las Vegas

2/27/04
TBA

Local (Nevada) experts

In addition to the LD Training Team listed on the previous page, several other adult educators have taken the initiative to become expert in specific areas, to the benefit of adult education throughout the state. Here are some Nevadans who can provide training and expertise:

GED	Val Lyons-Brady (TMCC)	775/575-6822, valbrady@sbcglobal.net
	Jeanie Thibault (CCSN)	702/651-4065 or 702/480-6192 jeanie_thibault@ccsn.nevada.edu
Family Literacy	Forty-seven adult and early childhood educators trained through National Center for Family Literacy. Contact Susan Graf (Nevada Literacy Coalition)	800/445-9673 or 775/684-3340 sfgraf@clan.lib.nv.us
Workstyles (Job Readiness Curriculum)	Robbie Fink (Catholic Charities of Southern Nevada)	702/693-6761, rfink@catholiccharities.com
CASAS State Level Certified Trainers	Claudia Bianca-DeBay (TMCC)	775/824-8604, cdebay@tmcc.edu
	Paul Marsala (TMCC)	775/829-9026, pmarsala@tmcc.edu
TOPSpro State Level Certified Trainer	Dimi Jefferis (CCSN)	702/651-4067, dimi_jefferis@ccsn.nevada.edu
JR (Just Right for Nevada) Reporting System	Ken Zutter	775/884-4185, jldata@kenzutter.com

NAEA Officers for 2003-2004



Shown from left, in "Cowboy Up" style at the spring 2003 MPAEA Conference: Sharyn Yanoshak, Paul Marsala, Wendy Raynor, Julee Henson, Jeanie Thibault, and Linda Bogle.

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	Sharyn Yanoshak (south)	702/253-6280	saylv@cox.net

Connecting resources for Nevada's adult workforce

Celebrate International Literacy Day September 8th!

Susan Graf, Literacy Coordinator at the Nevada Literacy Coalition, writes: "The National Literacy Coalition has updated its media toolkit for International Literacy Day. It includes many suggestions and examples of things you can do with your program and in your community to promote literacy on Sept 8th and throughout the year."

To access the toolkit: Go to the National Coalition's Web site (<http://www.natcoalitionliteracy.org>). Scroll down to the bottom of the home page until you see a black and red "National Literacy Summit Initiative" symbol. The text next to the symbol has a link to a PDF (downloadable) file of the updated media kit.

International Literacy Day was founded by UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) in 1967. UNESCO appoints a jury to award five international literacy prizes annually — The International Reading Association Literacy Award, the Noma Literacy Prize, two King Sejong Literacy Prizes, and the Malcolm Adiseshiah International Literacy Prize.

The International Reading Association Web site has published a fact sheet containing interesting background information about International Literacy Day. Visit http://www.reading.org/meetings/ild/fact_sheet.html.

It is estimated that 875 million of the world's adults do not know how to read or write (nearly two-thirds of this number are women), and that more than 110 million children lack access to education.

The social and economic status of adult literacy students contributes to their being considered a marginalized group. Evidence of the subsequent marginalization of the Adult Education and Literacy System can be seen in the media. The National Newspaper Index for the years 1982-1999 cites 6,742 articles about public schools, 2,604 about higher education — and only 53 about adult literacy education. —*"The Power of Adult Education," —Dr. Tom Sticht, March 2001.*